

President's Message.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

In coming before you for the first time as Chief Magistrate of this great nation, it is with gratitude to the Giver of all good for the many benefits we enjoy.

OUR COUNTRY.

We are blessed with peace at home without any entangling alliances abroad to forborne trouble, with a territory unsurpassed in fertility, of an area equal to an abundant support of five hundred millions of people, abounding in every variety of useful mineral, in quantity sufficient to supply the world for manufacture, exuberant crops and a variety of climate adapted to the production of every species of earth's riches, suited to the habits, tastes and requirements of every living thing. A population of forty millions of free people speaking one language, facilities for every mortal to acquire an education with institutions closing to none, the avenues to fame or any blessing of fortune that may be coveted, freedom of the press and school, and a revenue flowing into the treasury beyond the requirements of the government.

Happily, harmony is being rapidly restored within our own borders. Manufactures hitherto unknown in our country are springing up in all sections, producing a degree of national independence unequalled by any other power. These blessings, and countless others, are entrusted to your care and mine for safe keeping the brief period of your tenure of office. In a short time we must each of us return to the ranks of the people who have conferred our honors, and account to them for our stewardship. I earnestly desire that neither you nor I may be condemned by our free and enlightened countrymen, nor by our own conscience.

Emerging from a rebellion of gigantic struggle, as it was, by the sympathy and assistance of the nations with which we were at peace, eleven States of the Union were for four years left without legal State government.

A national debt had been contracted; American commerce was almost driven from the seas; the industry of one half of the country had been taken from the control of capitalists, and placed where all labor rightfully belongs, in the keeping of the laborers. The work of restoring the State governments loyal to the Union, of protecting and fostering free labor, of the providing of means for the payment of the interest on the public debt, has received ample attention from Congress.

Although your efforts have not met with success in all particulars that might have been desired, yet on the whole they have been more successful than could have been reasonably anticipated. Seven States which passed ordinances of secession, have been fully restored to places in the Union. The eighth, (Georgia,) held an election at which she ratified her constitution, republican in form and elected a Governor, members of Congress, State Legislature and other officers required. The Governor was installed; the Legislature met and performed all the acts then required of them by the reconstruction acts of Congress; subsequently, however, in violation of the Constitution which they had just ratified, as since decided by the Supreme Court of the State, they unseated the colored members of the Legislature and admitted to seats some members who are disqualified by the third clause of the 14th amendment, an article which they themselves had contributed to ratify. Under these circumstances I would submit to you whether it would not be wise without delay to enact a law authorizing the Governor of Georgia to convene members originally elected to the Legislature, requiring each to take an oath prescribed by the reconstruction acts, and none to be admitted who are ineligible under the 3rd clause of the 14th amendment.

The freedom, under the protection which they have received, are making rapid progress in learning, and no complaints are heard of a lack of industry on their part when they receive fair remuneration for their labor. The measures providing for paying the interest of the public debt, with all other expenses of the government, are more than ample. The loss of our commerce is only the result of the rebellion, which has not received sufficient attention from you. To this subject I call your earnest attention; but will not now suggest any plans by which this object may be effected, but will, if necessary, make it the subject of a special message during the session of Congress.

At the March term of Congress, by joint resolution, it authorized the Executive to order elections in the States of Virginia, Mississippi and Texas—to submit to them the Constitutions which each had previously framed, and to submit the Constitutions, either entire or in separate parts, to be voted upon at the directions of the Executive. Under this authority elections were called. In Virginia the election took place on the 6th of July. A Governor and Lt. Governor were elected, and have been installed. The Legislature met and did all required by this resolution, and by all the reconstruction acts of Congress, and abstaining from all doubtful. I recommend that her Senators and Representatives be promptly admitted to their seats, and that State be fully restored to its place in the family of States.

Elections were called in Mississippi and Texas to commence on the 30th of November—two days in Mississippi, and four days in Texas.

The elections have taken place, but the result is not yet known. It is hoped that the acts of the Legislature of these States when they meet will be such as to receive your approval and thus close the work of reconstruction.

FINANCE.

Among the evils growing out of the rebellion and not yet referred to, is that of an irredeemable currency. It is an evil which I hope will receive your most earnest attention. It is a duty and one of the highest duties of the Government to secure to citizens a medium of exchange of a fixed and unvarying value. This implies a return to a specie basis and no substitute for it can be devised—it should be commenced now, and reached at the earliest practicable moment, consistent with a fair regard to the interest of the debtor class. Immediate resumption of specie payment would not be desirable, it would compel the debtor to pay beyond their contracts in gold at the date of their purchase, and would bring bankruptcy and ruin to thousands. Fluctuations in paper value of the measure of which all values gold, is detrimental to the interest of trade. It makes the man of business an involuntary gambler, for in all sales where future payment is to be made, both parties must know as to what will be the value of the currency to be paid and received. I earnestly recommend to you, then, such legislation as will be certain to insure a gradual return to specie payments, and put an immediate stop to the fluctuation in the value of currency. The methods to be adopted in the former of these results are as numerous as speculators on political economy. To secure the latter I see but one way. That is to authorize the treasury to redeem its own paper at a fixed price, whenever presented; or withhold from circulation all currency so redeemed until sold again for gold. The vast resources of the nation, both developed and undeveloped ought make our credit the best on earth. With less burden of taxation than the citizen has endured for six years past, the entire public debt could be paid in ten years but it is not desirable that the people should be taxed to pay it in that time. Year by year the ability to pay increases in rapid ratio, but the burden of interest ought to be reduced rapidly as can be without the violation of contract. The public debt is represented in a great part by bonds having from five to twenty and from ten to forty years to run, bearing interest at the rate of six and five per cent respectively. It is optional with the government to pay these bonds at any period after the expiration of the least time mentioned upon their face. The time may be selected when the greatest party may be taken up, and rapidly approaching which all may be believing that all which are now due may be replaced in bonds bearing at a rate of interest not exceeding 4 per cent, and rapidly as the remainder becomes due, that they may be replaced in the same way. To accomplish this it may be necessary to authorize the interest to be paid at either of three or four of the money centers of Europe or by an Assistant Treasurer of the United States, at the option of the holders of the bonds. I suggest this subject for the consideration of Congress, and also, simultaneously with this, the propriety of redeeming our currency, before suggested, at its market value, at the time the law goes into effect, increasing the rate at which the currency will be bought and sold, from day to day, or week to week, at the same rate of interest as the Government pays upon its bonds, subject to tariff and internal revenue taxation, will necessarily receive your attention.

The office of Commissioner of Internal Revenue, is one of the most arduous and responsible under the government, and one which falls very little short of a Cabinet position in its importance and responsibilities. I would ask for it, therefore, such legislation as, in your judgment will place that officer upon a footing of dignity, commensurate with the importance and with a character and qualifications of a class of men required to fill it properly.

FOREIGN RELATIONS. As the United States is the freest of all nations so too its people naturally sympathize with all people who are struggling for liberty and self-government. I believe so sympathizing, as is due to our honor that we should abstain from enforcing our views upon unwilling nations and from taking an interested part, without invitation, in quarrels between different nations or between Governments and their subjects. Our course should always be in conformity with a strict course of justice and law, international and local, such has been the policy of the administration in dealing with these questions.

THE ALABAMA CLAIMS.

The outstanding claims between the United States and Great Britain failed to receive the advice and consent of the Senate. The time and circumstances attending the negotiation of that treaty were unfavorable to its acceptance by the people of the United States, and its provisions were wholly inadequate for the settlement of the alleged wrongs sustained by this government. The injuries resulting to the United States by reason of the course adopted by Great Britain during the war, in the increased rates of duties, the diminution of exports, and other obstructions to domestic industry and production; in its effect upon the foreign commerce of the country; in the decrease and transfer to Great Britain of our commercial marine; in the prolongation of the war and its increased cost, both in treasure and lives; in its suppression could not be adjusted and satisfied as ordinary commercial claims which continually arise between commercial nations, and yet the convention treated them as such ordinary claims for which they differ more in their gravity of their character than in the magnitude of their amount. Great even as is that difference, not a word was found in the treaty, and not an inference could be drawn from it, to remove the sense of the unfriendliness of the course of Great Britain in our struggle for existence, which has so deeply and universally impressed itself upon the people of this country.

Believing that a convention thus misconceived in its scope, and inadequate to its provisions, would not have produced the hearty, cordial settlement of the offending questions, which alone is consistent with the relations which I desire to have firmly established between the United States and Great Britain I regarded the action of the Senate in rejecting the treaty to have been wisely taken in the interests of peace, and as necessary step in the direction of a perfect and cordial friendship between the two countries. A sensible people, conscious of their power, are more at ease under a great wrong wholly unassailed than under the restraint of a settlement which satisfies neither their ideas of justice nor their grave sense of the grievance they have sustained. The rejection of the treaty was followed by a state of public feeling on both sides which I thought most favorable to our immediate attempt at renewed negotiations. Accordingly so instructed the minister of the United States to Great Britain and found that by her Majesty's minister. I hope that the time may soon arrive when the two governments can approach the subject of an appreciation of what is due to the right dignity and honor of each, and with the determination not only to remove the causes of complaint in the past but to lay the foundation of a broad principle of public law which will prevent future differences and tend to form a continued peace and friendship. This now is the only grave question which the United States has with any foreign nation.

The question of renewing the treaty for reciprocal trade between the United States and the British provinces on this continent is not favorably considered. In conformity with the recommendation of Congress a proposition to abolish mixed courts for the suppression of the slave trade is under negotiation. It having come to my knowledge that a corporate company, organized under British laws, proposed to land upon the shores of the United States and to operate their submarine cable under a concession from the Emperor of the French and of an exclusive right for

greatly interested. Instructions have been given our minister to the several States of Columbia to endeavor to obtain authority for a survey to determine the practicability of the undertaking. In order to comply with an agreement of the United States as to a mixed commission at Lima for adjustment of the claims, it becomes necessary to send a commissioner and secretary to Lima.

The good offices of the United States to bring about peace between Spain and the South American republics having been accepted by Spain, Peru and Chili, a congress has been invited to be held in Washington during the present winter. A grant has been given to Europeans of an exclusive right of transit over the territory of Nicaragua to which Costa Rica has given its assent, which it is alleged conflicts with the vested rights of the citizens of the United States. The Department of State has now this subject under consideration. The Minister of Peru having made representations that there was a treaty between Peru and Spain, and that Spain was constructing in and near New York thirty gunboats, which might be used by Spain to relieve the garrison at Cuba to operate against Peru; orders were given to prevent their departure. No further steps having been taken by the representatives of the Peruvian government to prevent the departure of these vessels, and I not feeling authorized to detain the property of a nation with which we are at peace, on mere Executive orders, the matter is referred to Congress. The conduct of the war between the allies and the Republic of Paraguay has made things with that country difficult of settlement. It had been deemed advisable to withdraw our representatives from there, towards the close of the last Administration, and the matter was referred to a convention, assigned to meet in London for settlement.

Invitations have been extended to the Cabinets of London, Paris, Florence, Berlin, Brussels, the Hague, Copenhagen, and Stockholm to empower their representatives at Washington to simultaneously enter into negotiations, and to conclude with the United States a convention, and indicate a form of uniform regulations as to the construction of the parts of vessels to be devoted to the use of emigrant passengers as to the quantity of food; as to the medical treatment of the sick, and as to the rules to be observed during the voyage, in order to secure ventilation, to promote health, to prevent impositions, and to protect the females, and providing for establishment of tribunals in the several countries for enforcing such regulations by summary process.

Your attention is respectfully called to the law regarding the tariff on Russian hemp, and to the question whether to fix the charges on Russian hemp higher than they are on Manila is not a violation of our treaty with Russia. Placing her produce on the same footing with those of the most favorable footing. Our manufactures are increasing with wonderful rapidity under the encouragement which they now receive, with the improvement in machinery already effected and still increasing, causing machinery to take the place of skilled labor to large extent. Our imports of many articles must fall largely within a few years; fortunately, too, manufactures are not confined to a few localities as formerly, are more diffused, making the interest in them equal in all sections. They give employment and support to hundreds of thousands of people at home and retain with us the means which otherwise would be shipped abroad. The extension of the railroads in Europe and the East is bringing into competition with our agricultural produce like products of other countries; self-interest if not self-preservation therefore dictates caution against disturbing any industrial interest of the country. It leads us also to the necessity of looking to other markets for the sale our surplus. Our neighbors south of us and China and Japan should receive our special attention. It will be the purpose of the administration to cultivate such relations with all these nations as to entitle us to their confidence and make it their interest as well as ours to establish better commercial relations.

Through the agency of a more enlightened policy than that heretofore pursued towards China, largely due to the agency and efforts of our own dis-

twenty years of telegraphic communication with the shores of France and the United States with the very objectionable feature of submitting all messages conveyed thereby to the scrutiny and control of the French government. I caused the French and British legations at Washington to be made acquainted with the probable policy of Congress on this subject as foreshadowed by a bill which passed the Senate in March last. The declaration of the representatives of the company is an agreement to accept, as a basis of their operations, the provisions of this bill, or such other enactments on the subject as might be passed during the approaching session of Congress, and also to use their influence to secure from the French government a modification of their concession and to permit the leasing of any cable belonging to any company incorporated by the authority of the United States or any State in the Union, and on their part not to oppose the establishment of any such cable. At the introduction of this agreement I directed the withdrawal of all opposition by the United States to the leasing of the cable, until the meeting of Congress. I regret to say that there has been no modification in this company's concession, nor so far as I can learn, have they attempted to secure one—their concession excludes capital and citizens of the United States from competing upon the shores of France.

I recommend legislation to protect the rights of citizens under the States and sovereignty of nations against such an assumption. I shall endeavor to secure, by negotiation, an abandonment of this principle of monopolies in the Ocean trade cables.

The unsettled political condition of other countries less fortunate than our own, sometimes induces their citizens to come to the United States for the sole purpose of becoming naturalized, and having secured this, they return to their native country and reside there without disclosing their change of allegiance, they accept official positions of trust and honor, which can only be held by citizens of their native lands. They journey under a passport, describing them as such citizens, and it is only when civil discord after perhaps years of quiet threatens their positions or their property or when their native State drives them into its military service, where their oath of allegiance is made known, they reside permanently away from the United States, they contribute nothing to its revenues, avoid the duties of citizenship and only make themselves known by a claim of protection from the United States, they contribute nothing to its revenues, avoid the duties of citizenship and only make themselves known by a claim of protection from the United States, they contribute nothing to its revenues, avoid the duties of citizenship and only make themselves known by a claim of protection from the United States, they contribute nothing to its revenues, avoid the duties of citizenship and only make themselves known by a claim of protection from the United States.

To secure the first of these Congress has taken two essential steps; first, in declaring by joint resolution that the public debt should be paid, principal and interest, in coin, and secondly, providing the means of paying. Providing the means, however, could not secure the object desired without a proper administration of the laws for the collection of the revenues and an economical disbursement of them. To this subject the administration has addressed itself with result, I hope, satisfactory to the country. There has been no hesitation in changing officials in order to secure an efficient execution of the laws—sometimes, too, where a mere party view, undesirable political results were likely to follow—nor any hesitation in sustaining efficient officials against remonstrances wholly political. It may be well to mention here the embarrassment possible to arise from the so-called tenure-of-office acts, and to earnestly recommend their repeal. It could not have been the intention of the framers of the Constitution, in providing that appointments made by the President should receive the consent of the Senate, that the latter should have the power to retain in office persons placed there by Federal appointments against the President. What faith can an Executive put in officials forced upon him, and those, too, whom he has suspended, for reason? How will such officials be likely to serve an Administration which they know does not trust them?

The third cannot be obtained by special legislation. It must be regarded as fixed by the constitution itself, and gradually acquiesced in by force of public opinion. From the foundation of the Government to the present, the management of the original inhabitants of this continent (the Indians) has been a subject of embarrassment and expense, and has been attended with continuous robberies, murders and wars. From my own own experience on the frontiers and in Indian countries, I do not hold either legislation or the conduct of the whites who come most in contact with the Indians, blameless for these hostilities.

The result has proven most satisfactory. It will be found more fully set forth in the report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. For superintendents and Indian agents not on reservations, officers of the army were selected. The reasons for this are numerous. Where Indian agents are sent there or near their troops must also be sent. The agent and the commander of troops are independent of each other, and are subject to orders from different departments of the government. The army officer holds a position for life, the agent one at the will of the President. The former is personally interested in living in harmony with the Indians and establishing a permanent peace to the end that some portion of his life may be spent in civilized society. The latter has no such personal interest. Another reason is an economical one; and still another, the hold which the Government has upon a life officer to secure a faithful discharge of the duties in carrying out a given policy. The building of railroads and the access thereby given to all the agricultural and mineral regions of the country is rapidly bringing civilized settlements into contact with all the tribes of Indians. No matter what ought to be the relations between such settlements and the aborigines, the fact is that they do not harmonize well, and one or the other has to give way in the end. A system which looks to the extinction of a race is too horrible for a nation to adopt without entailing upon itself the wrath of all Christendom, and endangering in the citizen a disregard for human life and the rights of others dangerous to society. I see no substitute for such a system except in placing all the Indians on large reservations as rapidly as it can be done, and giving them absolute protection there. As soon as they are fitted for it they should be induced to take their lands in severity and to set up territorial government for their own protection. For full details on this subject I call your special attention to the reports of the Secretary of the Interior and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

The report of the Secretary of the Navy accompanying this shows the condition of the navy. When this Administration came into office, and by changes made since, strenuous efforts have been made to place our navy vessels in commission, or render them fit for service when required, as far as possible, and to substitute the sail for steam while cruising, thus materially reducing the expense of the navy and adding greatly to its efficiency. Looking to our future, I recommend a liberal though not extravagant policy toward this branch of the public service.

The report of the Postmaster General furnishes a clear and comprehensive exhibit of the operations of the postal service and of the financial condition of the Postoffice Department. The primary postal revenue at the year ending June 30, 1869, amounted to \$16,444,910, and the expenditures to \$23,038,131. Your attention is respectfully called to the recommendation made by the Postmaster General for authority to change the rate of compensation to the main trunk railway lines for their services in carrying the mails, for having post routes, and for organizing and increasing the efficiency of the special agency service, for the increase of the mail service of the Pacific, and for establishing mail service under the flag of the Union in the Atlantic; and most especially do I call your attention to his recommendation for the total abolition of the existing post offices. This is an abuse from which no once receives a commensurate advantage. It reduces the receipts for postal service from twenty-five to thirty per cent, and largely increases the service to be performed. During the year ending September 30th, '69, the Postoffice incurred 13,762 patents, and its receipts were \$86,338, being \$21,926 more than the expenditures.

I respectfully call your attention to the recommendation of the Secretary of the Interior for uniting the duties of supervising the education of Indians with the other duties devolving upon the Commissioner of Education. If it is the desire of Congress to make the census during the year 1870 more complete and perfect, I would suggest early action upon any plan that may be agreed upon. As Congress at the last session, appointed a committee to take into consideration such measures as might be deemed proper in reference to the census, and to report a plan, I dissent from saying more.

I recommend to your favorable consideration the claims of the Agricultural Bureau for liberal appropriations. This country is diversified in climate and soil, and with a population so largely dependent upon agriculture, the benefits that can be conferred by properly fostering this Bureau are incalculable.

I desire respectfully to call the attention of Congress to the important claims of a number of the most important officers of the Government. In this message I will not enumerate them, but will specify only the Justices of the Supreme Court. No change has been made in their salaries for fifteen years. Within that time the labor of the country has largely increased, and the expense of living has at least doubled. During the same time Congress has twice found it necessary to increase largely the compensation of its own members and the duty it owes to another department of the Government, the army, and will doubtless receive the consideration.

CONCLUSION. There are many subjects not alluded to in this message, which might properly be introduced, but which, in a message of this nature, and the legislation most conducive to the interests of the whole people. On my part I promise a right adherence to the lines and their strict enforcement.

Washington, December 6, 1869.

made for the form of Boston, Portland, New York, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and San Francisco, is concurred in.

I call special attention to the recommendations of the Chief of Ordnance for the sale of arsenals and lands no longer of use to the Government; also to the recommendation of the Secretary of War that the act prohibiting promotions in the staff corps of the army be repealed. The extent of the country throughout the world is about to commence largely increased relations with that populous and hitherto exclusive nation. As the United States have been the initiators in this new policy, so they should be the most earnest in showing their good faith in making it a success. In this connection I advise such legislation as to forever preclude the enslavement of Chinese on our soil under the name of coolies, and also to prevent American vessels from engaging in the transportation of coolies to any country tolerating the system.

I also recommend that the mission to China be raised to one of the first class.

ON MY ASSUMING THE RESPONSIBLE DUTIES of chief magistrate of the United States, it was with the conviction that three things were essential to peace, prosperity and fullest development. First among these is strict integrity in fulfilling all our obligations; second to secure protection to the person and property of the citizen of the United States in each and every portion of our common country wherever he may choose to move without reference to his original nationality, religion, color, or politics, demanding of him only obedience to the laws, and proper respect for the rights of others; and third, the union of all the States, with equal rights, indestructible by any constitutional means. To be Garrisoned, and the number of military posts to be occupied, is the same with a reduced army as with a large one. The number of staff officers required is more dependent on the latter than the former condition.

THE NAVY. The report of the Secretary of the Navy accompanying this shows the condition of the navy. When this Administration came into office, and by changes made since, strenuous efforts have been made to place our navy vessels in commission, or render them fit for service when required, as far as possible, and to substitute the sail for steam while cruising, thus materially reducing the expense of the navy and adding greatly to its efficiency. Looking to our future, I recommend a liberal though not extravagant policy toward this branch of the public service.

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Homestead for Minors— Important Decision.

The Asheville Pioneer is informed by a member of the Court that Judge Henry made an important decision on the circuit just closed, which affects the rights of minors rising under the provisions of the Homestead. The point arose on the application of Lewis, administrator, to the court for leave to sell real estate to pay the debts of his intestate, Elzey, deceased. It appears that the deceased died during the war, and that owing to stay laws, military orders, &c., the administrator had not yet been able to close up the estate. To his application the heirs at law responded, alleging that one of their number had not yet attained his majority, and praying to be allowed under the provisions of the Constitution to have the Homestead exemption laid off according to law. His Honor held that they were so entitled, on the broad principle that the law was enacted for the benefit of the "helpless" ones—widows and minors. We understand that in this opinion the leading members of the bar concurred.